

To the Department of Transportation:

Dear Sir or Madam,

In regard to the proposed change of Wayne County Kentucky to the Eastern time zone, I wish to express my strong support. While those opposed to the change are no doubt sincere in their views, I believe that their reasons for opposing the change are not valid.

The most commonly given reasons for opposition expressed at the meeting held on the evening of June 24 seemed to be centered on three areas. These were the safety of children riding buses to school, inconvenience to farmers, and a dissatisfaction with the proposal not being put to a vote by county residents.

Mr. John Dalton, superintendent of Wayne County school systems, announced that the school would make any changes necessary to its class schedule to accommodate a time change. While a representative of Monticello Independent school was not present to comment, they should have even less trouble adjusting to a time change as they have a smaller enrollment. I have two children, a son who will be a high school sophomore in the fall and a daughter who will be in the eighth grade. Mr. Dalton stated that if the time change is approved, the school would push the starting time back by 45 to 60 minutes. My children will be able to sleep later in the morning, as their bed time will be based on the clock and not on sunset. I believe that the children will be more rested and better able to perform in school with this extra rest.

The farming issue was addressed at some length at the meeting, but one important aspect of farming was not discussed. Many people in this county who work in manufacturing jobs also farm part time after their work day is over. If these manufacturers keep working by the same time clock as they do now, a change to Eastern time would provide these part time farmers with an extra hour of daylight after work. This would make for more productive farming for part time farmers.

The third reason most often given by those opposed to a time change was the fact that a vote was not held on whether a time change should be asked for. Proposition votes are often poorly phrased on ballots and can be very confusing. As I understand the decision making process for this time change, public opinion will be a factor, but would not be the only deciding factor. The possibility of a time change was first raised last fall during a fiscal court meeting. At that time a public meeting and discussion were set and held with anyone who wished to voice an opinion allowed to do so. After weighing public opinion, the magistrates of the county dead locked with two in favor of forwarding the issue to the Department of Transportation and two opposed. At that time the judge executive cast the tie breaker in favor of the issue.

Apparently some clerical mistake had been made in the original request to the Department of Transportation and another vote was taken by the fiscal court. I would like to point out that this second vote was taken after new officials were sworn into office and only one member of the fiscal court was a hold over from the previous vote. Once again, the magistrates split on the issue with the judge executive

casting the tie breaker in favor of forwarding the issue to the Department of Transportation.

The representative of the Department of Transportation explained at the meeting held on June 24 that any request for a time change must come from the highest governing body in the area affected. This is exactly what happened in this case. The issue was first raised in an open meeting of the fiscal court. The time and place of the first meeting were announced and publicized by the local media and those who had an opinion were allowed to express it. I feel that this was actually more fair than a vote. People who had an opinion were allowed to state that they were for or against a change in the time zone and to explain in detail why they held that opinion. The fiscal court was able to not only know how many people were in support of each side of the issue, but why they were held their opinion. This gave the fiscal court the opportunity to weight the validity of each side and reach an informed decision.

The meeting on June 24 also served to let people explain why they held their opinion and here possible rebuttals of, or explanations to, their objections. This type of public forum has allowed the people of this county who have an opinion to express it, and both sides have done so. The people who have taken part in these public discussion have expressed their opinions, some times eloquently, some times in plain language, often passionately, and always with sincerity. Most of the people of this county that have participated in these public hearings have shown that they can support their opinion while respecting that of people with whom they strongly disagree. I feel that whatever decision is reached by the Department of Transportation will have been soundly discussed and given a fair and public hearing.

While I respect the views of those who are opposed to a time change, I must sincerely disagree with them. It just makes sense for Wayne County to change to Eastern time. As has been pointed out several times, the majority of our trade, travel, and communication are with areas in the Eastern time zone. While it is true that some people in this county travel to Albany, Bowling Green, or Nashville to work, shop, seek medical treatment, or go to college, it is also true that many more people who take part in these activities outside the county do so in Somerset, Richmond, Lexington, Knoxville, London, and Corbin.

The majority of the people who have business, social, or educational contacts out of the county will benefit. While it is true that a few people in this group will be inconvenienced, more will be helped by this change. People who confine all of these activities to the county will me impacted minimally, if at all. This change is clearly desirable as it will benefit more people and businesses than it will harm, wit a great many not being affected at all.

Sincerely,

Ed Lyons

P.S. Copies of the letter are being sent by E-Mail and by U.S. post to ensure that copies are received both quickly and in hard copy.

